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The Athenian Mercury:

Saturday, *June* 2. 1694.

Queſt. 1. *WHether or no* Moſes *was the Author of the* Pentateuch, *and what tolerable Anſwer can be made the ſeeming Contradiction in theſe Texts,* Deut. 1. 1. (2) Gen. 36. 31. Joſhua 14. 15. and Judges 18. 29. Gen. 12. 6. Gen. 16. 35. Deut. 34.

Anſw. That *Moſes* is now in poſſeſſion of the Title, and has in all Antiquity been the reputed Author, is too evident for the *Antipenteteuchians* to deny, there's nothing elſe then to be conſider'd but whether theſe objections rais'd by Perſons of equal Modeſty and Learning, I mean ſuch as have none to ſpare, are ſufficient to diſpoſſeſs that holy inſpir'd Author of his right, beſides the ill conſequences that ſuch Conceſſions would beget as to the reputation of the reſt of the Sacred Writ. But to the Objections in order:

Obj. 1. To that of *Deut.* 1. 1. *Theſe be the words which* Moſes *ſpake on the other ſide* Jordan, *&c.* This intimates that ſome perſon in *Canaan*, and not *Moſes* who never was in *Canaan*, wrote theſe words, 'tis anſwer'd, that the word in the Original tranſlated *on the other ſide*, does indifferently ſignify on any ſide, either this ſide or beyond, *on the ſide*, or on *one ſide*, as is evident from theſe places, 1 *Sam.* 14. 4. compared with *Ver.* 40. & *Joſhua* 22. 4. compared with *Ver.* 7. and *Joſephus* alſo mentioning this place which we tranſlate *on this ſide Jordan*, expreſſes it ὅτι πρὸς Ἰορδάνῃ, about or near *Jordan*, which he preſently after oppoſes to πέραν τῆς Ἰορδάνου, *Joſeph. Ant.* l. 4. c. 8.

Obj. 2. To the ſecond Objection, *viz.* Gen. 36. 31. *Theſe are the Kings that reigned in the Land of* Edom, *before there reigned any King over the Children of* Iſrael, *&c.* Seeming to intimate the Author muſt have known of Kings in *Iſrael*, and by conſequence not *Moſes*: 'Tis true a late Author in his *Prolegomena* to his Commentary on *Geneſis*, ſeems to give up the Cauſe, and thinks it beſt to own, that the Nine Verſes, *viz.* from *Ver.* 31, to 39. are interpolated by ſome other Perſon. 'Tis anſwer'd that *Moſes* knew there would be Kings over *Iſrael*, is unqueſtionable from *Deut.* 17. where he delivers Laws concerning that Matter, which ſhows the Objection has little force, tho' 'tis more probable that the Succeſſion of theſe Kings was before *Moſes* was ſent to call the Children of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt*, it's fairly collected that from the Marriage of *Eſau*, whoſe Off-ſpring theſe Kings were (as its more probable) to the Death of *Moſes*, were no leſs than 345 Years, and abating 40 we have above 300, which is time enough for the Reign of eight Kings before *Moſes*, eſpecially if they did not ſucceed one another as Heirs, for 'tis ſaid firſt that *Bela* the Son of *Beor* reigned, the Name of his City was *Dinhabah*, and *Bela* dyed, and *Jobab* the Son of *Zerah* of *Bozra* reigned, *&c.* which way of Succeſſion might very well be ſpeedy and before *Moſes*, and that *Moſes* himſelf was a King over *Iſrael*, or a *King in Jeſurun*, Deut. 33. 5. is enough proved by Mr. *Selden de Synedris*, l. 2. c. 1, 2. and conſequently what he here ſays he ſpeaks of himſelf, and properly enough.

Obj. 3. 'Tis ſaid that *Moſes* called ſuch places *Hebron* and *Dan* that were not ſo call'd 'till after his Death, *Joſh.* 14, 15. & *Judges* 18. 29. To the firſt its anſwer'd, that *Joſhua* does not ſay it was not call'd *Hebron* before that time, but *the Name of Hebron BEFORE was Kirjath Arbah*, now the word in the Original tranſlated before might have been tranſlated *in old time* or a *long time before*, viz. before *Moſes* himſelf, for it has that ſignification, and is ſo tranſlated in ſeveral other places, as *Pſalm* 102. 26. *Nehem.* 13. 5. But after all, what can the Objectors think of *Gen.* 37. 14. where *Hebron* is expreſly mention'd; ſee alſo *Gen.* 35. 27. As for *Dan* how can the Objectors prove this is the ſame *Dan*, ſince there was one that had an older Name, as *Jor Dan*, which *Joſephus* ſeems to mention, who tells us that *Abraham* fell upon the *Aſſyrians* (πρὸς Δάνον) about *Dan*, Antiq. *l.* 1. *c.* 10.

Obj. 4. And the *Canaanite* was then in the Land, *Gen.* 12. 6. *Hobs* and *Spinoza* tells us, it would be impertinent for *Moſes* to mention a thing ſo well known; for the *Canaanite* continu'd 400 Years after that, therefore its probable this was wrote after the Deſtruction of the *Canaanites*. *Anſwer*, In the very next words we read, *And the Lord appear'd unto Abraham, and ſaid, unto thy Seed will I give THIS Land*, that is, this Land which is now in the Poſſeſſion of the *Canaanites*, or of which the *Canaanites* were not yet diſpoſſeſs'd; ſo that the Text only tells us, that *THEN* when *Abraham* came firſt to it they were Poſſeſſors of it, and God promis'd it to his Poſterity.

Obj. 5. *And the Children of Iſrael did eat Manna forty Years, until they came to a Land inhabited*, Gen. 16. 35. If *Moſes* wrote this, he wrote of ſomething that happen'd *after his Death*. *Anſwer*, The foremention'd Commentator is for giving up this Verſe as he did the Nine before, the words *DID EAT* which *Moſes* uſes in the Preterperfect Tenſe have little weight in 'em; for nothing is more common amongſt the Sacred Writers than ſuch an Anallage of Tenſe, this very word אכלו is by our Interpreters elſewhere rendred in the *Future*, Pſal. 22. 29. *Iſa.* 65. 21. *Hoſea* 4. 10. See alſo *Gen.* 45. 18. where 'tis rendred *Ye ſhall eat*, &c. Again 'tis common among the *Jews* to give a full Number to that which ſtrictly is not Compleat, a thing ſo well known, that it needs not to be inſiſted on.

Obj. 6. There's a different Style in the ſeveral parts of the *Pentateuch*, and therefore probably not all writ by *Moſes*. *Anſwer*, This is only an Objection upon the Ignorant Reader, but no Paſſages have yet been produc'd which this Objection may be grounded upon, and 'till then 'tis as eaſily deny'd as aſſerted.

The laſt and moſt common *Objection* is, that *Moſes* could not write what we read, *Deut.* 34. upon the Account of his Death and Burial. It might be here anſwer'd, that *Moſes* might by way of Prophecy foreſee and write of theſe things, but there's no need of inſiſting on this, for we do not contend for any more than *Moſes* writing all before this, no more than we contend that St. *Paul* muſt write the Poſtſcripts to his Epiſtles, that he writ all to this place is; what all the *Objections* in the World cannot weaken, and 'tis probable that either *Joſhua* or one of the ſeventy Elders wrote this by way of Poſtſcript.

The Subſtance of theſe Anſwers are in the Biſhop of *Bath and Well's* Diſſertation on the Author of the *Pentateuch*, prefixt to his Commentary on the five Books of *Moſes*, lately publiſht in two Volumes. A Work of that abſolute Neceſſity and General Uſe, and beſides ſo very well performed, that 'tis the greateſt Bleſſing that the Age could receive, we having now not only the Scripture in our own Tongue, but alſo the doubtful places (ſo far as the reverend Author has gone) explain'd to every Capacity, and 'tis to be hop'd that we ſhall in time have the whole Bible done after the ſame manner, to the hindrance of thoſe many Errors and Schiſms, that forward ignorant and unlearned perſons run into for want of a due Knowledge.

Queſt. 2. *Has God determin'd the Time and Kind of every mans Death?*

Anſw. Read *Reverovicius* his Letters, and when you have done perhaps you may be of the ſame mind that we are, that thoſe points are unfathomable.

Queſt.

Queſt. 3. *A Gentlewoman whoſe only Son went to Sea about four Years paſt, from whom ſhe has never heard ſince, is deſirous to know ſince 'tis the duty of Parents to pray for their Children, whether ſhe may ſafely practiſe it, ſince ſhe knows not whether he be alive or dead.*

Anſw. We think this is already anſwer'd, however, becauſe it comes a great way, wee'll be civil to't and reply, that ſhe may undoubtedly, very ſafely pray for him, adding a ſuppoſition [if yet alive] and if he is not, her Prayers may do her ſelf good, and him no hurt.

Queſt. 4. *Are ſounds conveigh'd to the Ear by continuation, or Renovation? If by the firſt, why does the ſound of a Bell when 'tis lightly toucht immediately ceaſe? If the latter, how can the Noiſe of Canons be renew'd to ſo great a diſtance, ſeeing they may be heard above twenty Miles by Land, and near thrice as far by Sea?*

Anſw. We ſuppoſe by a continu'd Undulation of the Air, which being much more liquid than the Water, impreſſion is more eaſily made in't, and continu'd to a greater diſtance. Now in a Bell, one ſound is gone off, after a ſtroke, and is heard perhaps as many Miles diſtance, but there's another ſort of a tingling noiſe remaining about the Bell, which ſeems only to be made by the Eddy of the Air contain'd within it's mouth, and ſtill whirling round it, as ſoon therefore as the Bell is toucht this airy Circle is interrupted, and more eaſily broke than a Bubble when toucht in any part on't, whereby that *Syſtem* of Air is diſſolv'd, and the ringing ſort of ſound immediately ceaſes, tho' the greater ſound was before communicated to diſtant places by greater and larger Undulations.

In the laſt *Mercury* but one, *Num.* 2. *Col.* 3. towards the End, inſtead of theſe words, *which is in much more ſimple Terms than the Common Methods will give for the ſpeedy and ſhort Methods of reſolving Numeral Queſtions, whether by one or more poſitions, whether determined or indetermined, See the new Treatiſe of* Algebra, *writ by Mr.* Sault, Math. *in* Adams Court *in* Broadſtreet: Read thus, *which is in much more ſimple Tearms than the common Methods will give;* For *ſpeedy and ſhort Methods*, &c.

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